

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 KINSHA 05263 231629Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

INRE-00 MCE-00 L-03 SS-15 SSO-00 SP-02 NSCE-00

PM-05 IO-13 OPR-02 /073 W

-----089659 231637Z /50

O 231550Z MAY 78

FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 9938

SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T KINSHASA 5263

E.O. 11652: GDS-86

SUBJECT: SHABA ATTACK-EXTENT OF U.S. SUPPORT FOR FRENCH OPERATION

REF: A) STATE 127772 B) STATE 128840 C) PARIS 16197 D) KINSHASA 5121

E) KINSHASA 5164 F) KINSHASA 5203

1. FRENCH AND GOZ FORCES OPERATIONS IN SHABA ARE ON A COMPLETELY INTEGRATED BASIS. FOR EXAMPLE, IT WAS LEARNED EVENING OF 22 MAY THAT FRENCH OFFICERS WILL COMMAND FAZA MIRAGE AND HELICOPTER ASSETS. WE UNDERSTAND THAT BILATERAL GOF/GOZ ARRANGEMENTS CALLED FOR INTRODUCTION OF FRENCH FORCES INTO ZAIRE TO BE LOGISTICALLY SUPPORTED, TO THE EXTENT FEASIBLE, BY FAZ. LOGISTICAL PLAN ENVISIONS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MAIN LOGISTICAL BASE KINSHASA WITH ADVANCE BASE AT KAMINA.

2. THUS FAR GENERAL BABIA HAS MADE THREE REQUESTS THROUGH CHZAMISH, FOR FURTHER US SUPPORT:

A. MOVEMENT OF 800 DRUMS OF POL FROM KINSHASA TO KAMINA (REF D).

B. USE OF ONE C-141 FOR TWO TO FOUR WEEKS FOR "WHOLESALE" DISTRIBUTION, KINSHASA-KAMINA (REF D).

C. CONTINUED OPERATION OF R-14 REFUEL SYSTEM AT KAMINA (REF E) FOR FRENCH/FAZ USE.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 KINSHA 05263 231629Z

3. CHZAMISH HAS EXPLAINED EXTENT OF USG COMMITMENT AT THIS TIME DRAWING ON REFTEL A. HE EXPLAINED FURTHER THAT PER REFTEL B, GOF HAS INDICATED TO USG THAT NO FURTHER US ASSISTANCE FOR FRENCH OPERATIONS IS REQUIRED AT THIS TIME.

4. FRENCH LIAISON OFFICER AT GOZ CHQ (LTCOL WAGNER) INFORMS US

HIS INSTRUCTIONS ARE TO PASS IN-COUNTRY LOGISTICAL REQUIREMENTS TO BABIA-NOT TO PARIS. BABIA IS UNDER IMPRESSION FRENCH FORCES QRE OPERATING IN ZAIRE AS PART OF FAZ; ACCORDINGLY, HE SAYS, REQUESTS FOR USG IN-COUNTRY ASSISTANCE SHOULD COME FROM GOZ. REFTTEL C ON CONTRARY INDICATES THAT GEN DELAVAL IN PARIS WISHES REQUESTS TRANSMITTED THROUGH FRENCH COMMANDER.

5. ZAMISH HAS EXPLAINED TO FRENCH, BELGIANS AND ZAIRIANS AT GOZ MILITARY HEADQUARTERS THAT USG ROLE IN OPERATION IS TO PROVIDE LOGISTICAL SUPPORT IN CONNECTION WITH OPERATIONS WHICH BELGIANS AND FRENCH UNDERTOOK TO PROTECT FOREIGN NATIONALS IN AREA OF KOLWEZI AND SHABA. THEREFORE ANY GOZ REQUESTS IN CONNECTION WITH PRESENT OPERATION (BEYOND FMS) SHOULD BE CHanneled THROUGH FRENCH AND BELGIANS. WE ARE STILL AWAITING ANY SUCH SPECIFIC REQUESTS FROM FRENCH AND BELGIAN GOVERNMENTS.

6. COMMENT: WHILE FRENCH AND ZAIRIAN MILITARY ARE WORKING OUT THEIR OWN COMMAND RELATIONSHIP, AND NOW DEPARTURE DATE FOR FRENCH HAS BEEN MENTIONED, BRUSSELS 09552 HAS INFORMED US THAT ONE BELGIAN BATTALION NOW PLANS TO STAY IN SHABA IN-DEFINITELY. GIVEN SERIOUS POTENTIAL FOR FURTHER DETERIORATION OF SECURITY SITUATION IN SHABA, EMBASSY WELCOMES BELGIAN DECISION TO STAY AND SEES TEMPORARY PRESENCE OF BELGIAN AND FRENCH FORCES AS POSSIBLE SHORT-TERM SOLUTION TO PROBLEM OF PROTECTING AND REASSURING FOREIGN POPULATION, WHICH IS OF COURSE KEY TO SHABAN ECONOMY.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 KINSHA 05263 231629Z

7. IN REF D, I RAISED QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE ADVISABILITY OF OUR SUPPORTING FRENCH IF THEY DECIDED TO PROLONG THEIR STAY IN ZAIRE BEYOND A MERE RESCUE OPERATION. NOW THAT BELGIANS HAVE DECIDED TO EXTEND THEIR STAY HERE, WE MUST POSE SIMILAR QUESTIONS CONCERNING ANY CONTINUED US SUPPORT FOR GOB EFFORT. EMBASSY ASSUMES THAT USG CONSULTATIONS WITH FRENCH AND BELGIAN GOVERNMENTS ARE UNDERWAY ON THIS SUBJECT. WHILE CONSULTATIONS PROCEED HOWEVER, EMBASSY RECOMMENDS THAT REFUELING INSTALLATION AND SATCOM PLUS NCESSARY SUPPORT PERSONNEL BE LEFT AT KAMINA FOR SHORT ADDITIONAL TIME, AT LEAST UNTIL PICTURE BECOMES CLEARER. TO REMOVE THEM MAY 23 AS EARLIER SCHEDULED WOULD CRIPPLE ONGOING OPERATIONS. USCINCEUR 231125Z INDICATES THAT BELGIAN MOD HAS REQUESTED DELAY IN THEIR REMOVAL AND WE ANTICIPATE REQUEST AS WELL FROM FRENCH (PARA 3, REF E). MOREOVER, HASTY REMOVAL OF THAT SYSTEM IS SURE TO BE INTERPRETED BY GOZ AS LACK OF CONCERN ON PART OF USG FOR SITUATION WHICH IS STILL EXTEMELY DELICATE.

8. THE PROTECTION OF FOREIGN NATIONALS IN SHABA REMAINS A VALID PURPOSE FOR THE FRENCH AND BELGIAN OPERATIONS. WHILE AT THIS STAGE I REMAIN EXTREMELY WARY OF COMMITTING USG TO ANY LONG-TERM INVOLVEMENT WITH OUR EUROPEAN ALLIES IN THIS OPERATION, WE

SHOULD AT LEAST ALLOW THEM TIME TO REASSURE THEIR FRIGHTENED
NATIONALS SO WE CAN SEE WHERE WE STAND. WITH THIS IN MIND,
I RECOMMEND THAT THE SCHEDULED MAY 23 WITHDRAWAL OF THE REFUELING
CAPABILITY (AND POSSIBLY SATCOM) AT KAMINA BE DELAYED AT
LEAST UNTIL MAY 26. BELIEVE WE SHOULD ACT ON OTHER TWO REQUESTS
IN PARA 3 ABOVE ONLY WHEN AND IF SPECIFICALLY REQUESTED TO DO SO
BY BELGIAN AND/OR FRENCH GOVERNMENTS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY ASSISTANCE, INVASIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978KINSHA05263
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780216-0985
Format: TEL
From: KINSHASA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780530/aaaaayxr.tel
Line Count: 124
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: d09a0799-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 127772, 78 STATE 128840, 78 PARIS 16197, 78 KINSHASA 5121
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2607897
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SHABA ATTACK-EXTENT OF U.S. SUPPORT FOR FRENCH OPERATION
TAGS: MOPS, PINT, MASS, FR, CG
To: STATE DOD
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/d09a0799-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014